

## MASSACHUSETTS RARE AND ENDANGERED PLANTS

### ESTUARY BEGGAR-TICKS (Bidens hyperborea var. colpophila)

#### DESCRIPTION

Estuary Beggar-ticks is an annual plant in the Composite family reaching a height of half a meter. Flowering heads are one to few, found in the leaf axils and terminating the plant. Flower heads may be composed of a central yellowish button of disk flowers or may also have short yellow rays (petal-like flowers) surrounding the disk. The leaves are smooth, opposite, and stalkless. The one-seeded dried fruit, known as an achene, is rough-hairy and has three barbed teeth. These barbed fruits become easily attached to the clothing of passers-by, hence the common name. Estuary Beggar-ticks usually flowers from August through September.

#### SIMILAR SPECIES

Eaton's Beggar-ticks (Bidens eatonii) occurs in practically the same habitat, although the two species have not been found together in Massachusetts. It differs from Estuary Beggar-ticks in having obviously stalked leaves and practically hairless achenes. Another species, Swamp Beggar-ticks (Bidens connata) may grow in the upper tidal zone but is taller, with broader leaves and achenes with wart-like bumps.

#### HABITAT IN MASSACHUSETTS

Found along muddy margins and exposed banks of large tidal rivers, growing with wild rice, water plantain, water pimpernel, cardinal flower, climbing hempweed, and smartweeds. Although covered by daily tides, the plants occur well upstream where salinity is low.

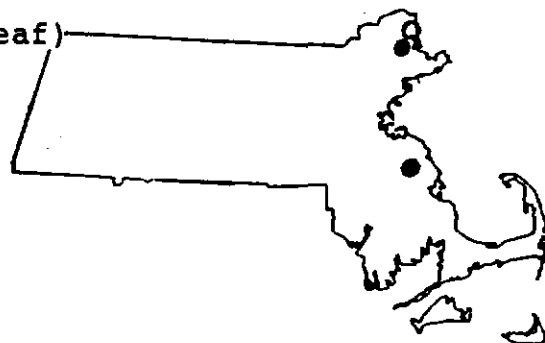


Gleason, W.A. The New England and Brown  
Illustrated Flora of the Northeastern U.S.  
and Adjacent Canada. New York Botanical  
Garden, 1932.



Distribution of Estuary Beggar-ticks

(continued on overleaf)



● Verified since 1978  
○ Reported prior to 1978

Distribution in Massachusetts by Town

## Estuary Beggar-ticks

### RANGE

Estuary Beggar-ticks ranges from Gaspé Peninsula, Quebec, to Nova Scotia, Massachusetts, and the Hudson River, New York. Also found in the James Bay region.

### POPULATION STATUS

Estuary beggar-ticks is considered an "Endangered" species in Massachusetts. Currently, to present, only two occurrences have been vouchered; historically only one other occurrence was reported. This species is rare in the state because it is near the southern limit of its range and because fewer than five exemplary occurrences of the community type it inhabits are found in Massachusetts. Threats include damming and subsequent flooding or drawdown, filling of marshes, and unwarranted siltation.